

**Human Services Advisory Council
Minutes of January 12, January 19 and January 26, 2006 Meetings**

January 12, 2006

HSAC Members Present: Mary Beth Sefton, Leslie Gordon, David Rogers, Melanie Elliott
Staff: Pam Doran

Call to Order and Adoption of Agenda: The meeting was called to order at 7:07 by Chair David Rogers. The Agenda was adopted as written.

Public Hearing on the FY2007 Community Services Fund: Two applicants made presentations to HSAC on their applications for Community Service Funding.

Boy Scouts of America, National Capitol Area Council: John Erskine, Finance Director for the National Capitol Area Council, presented the Boy Scouts application for \$5000 to fund activities in the Falls Church area. The Scouts applied to the CSF last year but were not granted any funds. Falls Church is part of the National Capitol Area Council, which has 82,000 Scouts and 32,000 adults. Currently, there are 282 Scouts and 126 adult volunteers in City-based groups, which is about 0.6% of the National Capitol Area Council. The requested funds will be used for items such as recruitment materials, leader training, day camp equipment and scholarships to allow underprivileged boys to attend the Cub Scout day camp. Other sources of funding for the organization are direct and indirect donations (United Way, etc.), proceeds from product sales and activity fees. Approximately 15% of the Boy Scouts program costs are administrative.

Friends of the Falls Church Winter Emergency Homeless Shelter: Mr. Ron Brousseau, Chair of the Friends Advisory Board, presented their application for \$13,800 to support operation of the emergency overflow shelter. The Friends of the Emergency Shelter has been granted \$10,000 in CSF funding for the past several years. The FY07 request is \$3,800 higher than past grant applications to reflect an expected decrease in CDBG funding. Mr. Brousseau reminded HSAC that in the past, the shelter has received a total of \$20,000 in City funding (a combination of CSF and CDBG funds). These funds have been leveraged to a total of \$98,000 in the past few years, including both cash and in-kind donations from approximately 150 donors. Mr. Brousseau acknowledged that the shelter is allowed to operate on City owned property free of charge, and reminded HSAC that provision of emergency beds to the homeless is a priority in the City's Consolidated Plan. Operation of the shelter will continue to be provided by New Hope Housing. A new program of life skills training will offer to clients of the shelter beginning in FY06. The Friends of the Shelter also are also exploring the possibility of expanding the facility by adding a room with 5-8 new beds, and are hoping to network with other area groups to begin offering day services to clients. It has not yet been determined if the additional beds would be for men or women; traditionally, the majority of clients are men. Mr. Brousseau provided HSAC with data on clients who have used the shelter this year, since the beginning of December.

Other Business:

HSAC Membership: Pam Doran noted that Gail Gulliksen will not apply for reappointment to HSAC because of her work travel schedule. Both Melanie Elliott and Mary Beth Sefton will be leaving HSAC as well in the next few months, so there will be several openings. The City Council will be sponsoring a recruiting fair on Feb. 1 to solicit members for several Boards and Commissions; it was asked that representatives from the current Boards attend to answer questions and provide information. Several HSAC members expressed willingness to attend the fair.

Possible Consolidation of CDBG and CSF processes: City Council is looking to the Housing Commission and HSAC for input on possible consolidation of moneys and the grant process for CDBG and community services funds. Also, Council is asking for feedback on how to handle (real estate) tax abatement requests from City non-profits. Three options have been identified to address tax abatement, including allowing only those abatements that are currently outlined by state law; developing a separate tax abatement policy to be administered by the City; or incorporating a grant in lieu of taxes as part of the CDBG/CSF fund process. HSAC briefly discussed possible impacts of all of these proposals. Specific issues identified with combining the CSF with CDBG included impact on the current timetable for the CSF; also it was noted that groups would not have a backup if their CDBG funding request is not met (i.e., now if they are not granted their request through CDBG, they can apply for CSF funds). Also, concern was expressed that because CDBG funds are primarily related to housing needs, combining the two funds might result in more focus on affordable housing and other, diverse services might lose their funding. On the other hand, it was noted that combining the two funds might provide a more holistic approach to human service funding in the City. Pam Doran reported that staff feels combining the two processes would not significantly reduce their workload. HSAC agreed to meet jointly with the Housing Commission at the February HSAC meeting to discuss these issues.

Women's Center: Pam Doran reported that the Women's Center has not met their reporting requirements so their grant contract with H.H.S. will be terminated.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

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**Community Services Fund Public Hearing
January 19, 2006**

HSAC Members Present: Mary Beth Sefton, Leslie Gordon, David Rogers, Melanie Elliott
Staff: Pam Doran

Call To Order and Adoption of Agenda: The meeting was called to order at 6:50 p.m. by Vice Chair Melanie Elliott. The order of presentations from applicants was revised to allow the applicants who were present to proceed in the order they arrived at the meeting.

Public Hearing on the FY2007 Community Services Fund: Six applicants made presentations on their applications to the Community Services Fund.

The Arc of Northern Virginia: Kathy May presented the grant application for the Arc of Northern Virginia. The Arc is a first-time applicant, and is asking for \$8,100 to be used to support a technology upgrade and additional technical support for their computer network. The Arc provides support and advocacy services to individuals with cognitive, intellectual and developmental disabilities, as well as to their families and caregivers, in Falls Church, Arlington, Alexandria and Fairfax. The Arc is a membership organization, and has 60 members residing in Falls Church; additional services may reach City residents through anonymous phone requests for information, etc. Funding for the organization comes from private donations, fees, fundraisers and some small grants. Mark Gross also spoke briefly on behalf of the Arc as Falls Church's representative to of the Community Services Board as well as member of the organization, and urged HSAC to fund their application.

Easter Seals Child Development Center of Northern Virginia: Dan Driscoll, Patricia Rhorer, and Laurence Nurse presented the application for the Easter Seals CDC. Easter Seals CDC has received some funding from the CSF in the past, and is currently asking for \$8,900. (CDC also receives in-kind funding in that they have a \$1 annual lease for City property.) This application is for funds to develop an intergenerational program to bring senior citizens from the Sunrise Assisted Living Center to the CDC to interact with the children; it is expected that both the children and the participating seniors will benefit from the program. Mr. Nurse distributed an overview of the program that described expected benefits. There are currently 18 City residents enrolled in the Center, which is 30% of the total enrollment. CDC is working with the activities director at Sunrise to develop this program; Sunrise staff will identify and train senior participants. When asked, Mr. Nurse explained that there is strong parental involvement in the Center's day-to-day programs, but parents will not specifically interact with the seniors who visit. It was asked what the role of the consultant described in the application will be; Mr. Nurse responded the consultant will be hired to work with CDC staff both to make sure equipment at the Center is appropriate for seniors to use as well as to train CDC staff on how to work effectively with senior citizens.

Commonwealth Alliance for Drug Rehabilitation and Education: Judy Becker presented CADRE's application for \$5,000 to support their efforts in substance abuse prevention. CADRE has received \$5,000 from the CSF for several years. Funds are requested to purchase materials for Red Ribbon Week, CADRE and AOD/Violence prevention activities, to support

youth outreach programs (i.e. after school clubs and activities), and for guest speakers on AOD/violence at George Mason High School. Ms. Becker distributed the summary of the most recent PRIDE survey for Falls Church middle and high school students, which illustrated that substance abuse is an issue in the City. When asked, Ms. Becker explained that although she is affiliated with the high school, CADRE is a community-wide organization that includes parents, community members, and the police department and their activities reach the entire community.

Health Services Agency of Northern Virginia: Dean Montgomery, Executive Director, spoke to HSAC concerning HSNV's application for \$1,600 which will be used to support their activities in regional health care planning and regulation. HSNV has received funds in the past from the CSF, and also receives funding from the state and other local jurisdictions. HSNV will focus its efforts on expanding access to health care for the uninsured and medically indigent in the area. Mr. Montgomery estimates that up to 25% of the population is affected by lack of medical coverage. Of particular interest, HSNV is working to attain specialty health care services for this population at service providers such as CAT scanning centers, etc. When asked if their focus includes dental care, Mr. Montgomery stated no, but did mention another group, Access to Care, that does work to obtain dental, as well as medical, care for those in need.

HOPE in Northern Virginia: Andrea Frank, Bill Schumann, and Pat Holiday addressed HOPE's application for \$1,200 to support their program to provide childbirth and parenting classes to pregnant women. HOPE is a first-time applicant to the CSF, but has been in operation in Falls Church City for more than 30 years. HOPE is a crisis pregnancy center that provides counseling and assistance to pregnant women regardless of age and marital status. HOPE is a pro-life organization, but has no political or religious affiliations. HOPE has one paid employee and approximately 150 volunteers who are extensively trained. Many of HOPE's clients are poor or indigent, and all services, including medical referral, legal advice, education, materials and equipment are provided free of charge. Other sources of income include direct donations of money and goods, and United Way and Combined Federal Campaign donations. It was noted that outcomes are difficult to track, as all services are totally confidential.

Falls Church Housing Corporation: Carol Jackson, Executive Director, spoke to the application from the FCHC for \$8,870 to help support their rent subsidy program. FCHC has not received CSF funds in the past, but does receive other funding from the City. The requested funding will be used to pay real estate taxes on a home that FCHC is renting to an individual employed in the City at a reduced rate. Ms. Jackson reminded HSAC that housing costs in the area are extremely high. She also explained that the Corporation is looking into the possibility of owning this property as a land trust, where the FCHC will own the land and an individual who meets the appropriate criteria can purchase the house/property separately at an affordable rate. The specifics of such an arrangement are still to be determined, but Ms. Jackson assured HSAC that all future occupants would meet appropriate income requirements to maintain the house as an affordable dwelling.

Other Business:

HSAC reviewed plans for the February 16th meeting; the first hour will be devoted to CSF recommendations, and the second hour will be a joint meeting with the Housing Commission to discuss the tax abatement issue and the possibility of combining the CDBG and CSF funds. The following considerations were identified by HSAC concerning these two issues:

- 1) CDBG/HOME funds cannot be used for a grant-in-lieu of taxes, but a portion can be used for community service activities;
- 2) City leadership has a strong interest in developing a grant-in-lieu program with strict guidelines;
- 3) The accounting process for HHS will not change if the two funds are combined;
- 4) Adding the grant-in-lieu option to the CSF may cause an influx of new applicants;
- 5) Although a grant-in-lieu program would be competitive and limited (i.e. each year applicants would have to reapply), recipients may develop an attitude of entitlement;
- 6) It may be appropriate to increase the CSF fund, particularly if a grant-in-lieu program were established; and finally,
- 7) Combining the two funds would benefit CDBG but not the CSF recipients.

HSAC will discuss these issues with the Housing Commission on the 16th of February. The meeting will be divided into two sessions; the first hour will be HSAC's deliberations for CSF recommendations; the second hour will be the joint meeting/discussion with the Housing Commission. In order to facilitate the two meetings, HSAC members will submit their evaluation scores and dollar recommendations for the CSF applications to HHS by Feb. 10th.

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

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**Community Services Fund Public Hearing
January 26, 2006**

HSAC Members Present: Mary Beth Sefton, Leslie Gordon, Melanie Elliott
Staff: Pam Doran

Call To Order and Adoption of Agenda: The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Vice Chair Melanie Elliott. The agenda was adopted as written.

Public Hearing on the FY2007 Community Services Fund: Five applicants made presentations on their applications to the Community Services Fund.

Homestretch: Nancy Taxson spoke to HSAC on the Homestretch's application for \$18,000; Homestretch has received funds from the CSF for the past several years. Funds will continue to be used to support the transitional housing program, which focuses on families, and provides housing assistance, life and job skills training and other support services. Homestretch manages 72 properties, 24 of which they own; 6 of their properties are in the City. Recently, they hired a property manager to maintain the buildings. Ms. Taxson described some renovations that have been done to Homestretch's space; she also described several awards they have received in the last few years. Finally, Ms. Taxson reported that Homestretch will also be partnering with a staff member at George Mason University to pilot a money management curriculum exclusively written for low-income children.

Ives House - Transitional Housing for Women: Nancy Taxson presented the application for the Ives House, which is jointly sponsored by Homestretch, the Falls Church Housing Corporation, and Falls Church Presbyterian. This is the first year Ives House has been in operation and has applied for CSF funding; Ives House has received CDBG funding. The Ives house provides comprehensive transitional housing services to homeless single women, including housing, life skills and job skills training, English as a second language, etc. Most of the residents of Ives House have been victims of domestic violence. The requested funds are for general operating/program costs; the costs at Ives House are averaging approximately \$15,000 per woman per year. Nancy noted that there are 32 shelter beds for women in northern Virginia; although the most recent point-in-time survey shows there are 2000 homeless individuals, it does not break down the total by gender.

Legal Services of Northern Virginia: Charles Greenfield, Executive Director, presented the application for LSNV for \$10,920 to support its primary mission of providing legal assistance in civil matters to low-income and senior residents. LSNV has received funding from Falls Church over the past several years; this request reflects an increase of about 5% over last year's request. Mr. Greenfield distributed a summary of two studies showing that providing legal support helps reduce domestic violence. LSNV is expanding its efforts to address domestic violence, but also provides legal assistance with other family law issues such as child support, property and divorce, as well as assistance with housing, consumer and health needs. Mr. Greenfield explained that a fair number of the attorneys that donate services do so in exchange for professional training/workshops provided by LSNV. Mr. Greenfield also

described progress LSNV has made in increasing salaries for their paid staff; he also described other fundraising efforts that LSNV has undertaken recently.

Offender Aid and Restoration: Gail Arnall, Executive Director for OAR presented their application for \$22,000 for their program. OAR has received funding in the past from the CSF. Other OAR funding is from other local jurisdictions as well as the state and federal government, grants, United Way, and donations. Dr. Arnall shared some demographic information about participants in OAR programs: 12% are women, most of whom are high school graduates; 50% of the male population has not finished high school; approximately 80% of cases are drug-related and non-violent; and most of the males are between 20 and 28 years of age. OAR has three programs: Community service opportunities, pre-release educational and life skills training, and post-release assistance with life skills, job placement, housing, etc. Dr. Arnall distributed copies of the Offender Reentry Services Coalition annual report for 2005. Dr. Arnall also described a couple of new projects OAR is considering, including establishing a florist business to provide more post-release employment opportunities to clients, and also introducing a pre-release educational program to appropriate clients that has been developed and provided to OAR by the Mexican government.

Falls Church Community Service Council: Mel Cotner, Furniture Project Manager, and Beth McCarthy, Clothing and Transportation Project Manager, presented the FCS application for \$9,900 for the two programs. FCS has received funding over the past several years from the CSF. Since 1973, FCS has operated its furniture program, which coordinates donations and transport of furniture to needy families. Referrals come from local clergy and service providers. Requested funds for this program are for insurance, truck maintenance, and personnel. Mr. Cotner noted that last year, there was a critical need for beds and dressers, and only 75% of requests were met. Beth McCarthy presented the request for funds to support the clothing and transportation voucher program established last year, as well as to support the request for an administrative assistant. Ms. McCarthy reported that the clothing program has been successful and about half of the funds granted last year have been used. The transportation program, which provides taxi chits, Metro passes, and bus tokens, also is successful; most have been used to get to work, but requests have also been made to help a child get to school, and for a doctors appointment. Ms. McCarthy noted that FCS does operate a volunteer transportation program that also provides rides to doctor appointments. When asked about accountability, Ms. McCarthy assured HSAC that she keeps track of the use of the transportation vouchers; also Mr. Cotner noted that the clergy, which is involved in most referrals to FCS, keeps track of client use of those services.

Other Business:

Pam Doran reported that she asked for guidance from the City Attorney on granting funds to HOPE, which described itself as a pro-life organization. He advised that any recommendation should state specifically that CSF funds are for the childbirth classes only, not general counseling activities.

Leslie Rogers will represent HSAC at the Boards and Commissions Recruitment Fair on February 1. Leslie asked Pam for materials that can be made available; Pam will provide copies of past annual reports and other materials that might be of interest.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

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